**MINUTES OF AFRICA RISING AUGUST MEETING**

Date: 30/08/2016

Time: 9AM

Venue: ICRISAT conference hall

**Agenda**

1. Progress report from site coordinators
2. Management briefs
3. Progress of implemented activities for 2016 from partner institutes
4. Follow-up of planned events following June 2016 meeting
5. Interim report preparation
6. AoB

The meeting started at 9AM, attended by 12 participants (see Annex for the list). Discussions were held on each agenda presented by the program manager in Mali.

1. **Progress report from site coordinators**

The two site coordinators, Mr karamoko Traore for Koutiala district, and Mr Dicko Mahamadou for Bougouni district presented the progress of activities in the intervention villages. Their presentation focused on implementation of planned activities in the technology park areas and collaboration work with partner institutions in the intervention villages.

Mr.Karamoko informed participants a total of 60 farmers (23% women) were trained on improved land and water management practices in M’Pessoba technology park. A trial for the joint protocol (ICRISAT-ICRAF & AVRDC) was established in M’Pessoba technology park. Other biophysical monitoring have been progressing well. Hence data on runoff, erosion rate, soil moisture, rainfall and shallow well have been recording since the beginning of the rainy season. Mr. Karamoko highlighted that the second technology park in N’Golonianasso was established successfully and agronomic and other biophysical experimentation work have been started. The team in Koutiala (Mr. Karamoko, the field technician and intern) have been working very closely with IER on the implementation of runoff and erosion monitoring station establishment in the new technology park. Similarly the team assisted AVRDC in the activities related to nutrition work, seed production techniques, establishment of trails (Okra) and seed distribution. The Koutiala team also worked with ICRAF on evaluation of land management practices (contour bunding & fruit trees), installation of food banks and organization of a technology fair. In addition the team worked with AMEDD on capacity building activities, mobilization of field animators, monitoring of agronomic activities and data management from intervention villages. Three points were highlighted at the end of his presentation:

Need to improve communication efforts among different research institutes. This refers to the presence of researchers on the ground when they are called for planning field operation, and during feedback sessions. As scientists are engaged in multiple research activities they were told to plan their work accordingly and need to respond to the call by site coordinators to be in the intervention villages for different operation. All agreed

* Need to establish technology parks in other Africa RISING intervention villages
* Need to organize an Africa RISING field day. Presently we are discussing to fix the date for the event

In his part Mr. Dicko presented activities implemented by ICRISAT and partner institutes in the target villages and also in the Technology Parks of Flola and Madina. Accordingly data related to all biophysical, agronomic and socio-economic have been collected during the current agronomic season. Madina Technology Park was established in Madina village, clearing the site and other logistic operation took time to prepare the park for agronomic activities. Mr. Diko also highlighted the extra-ordinary IP meeting in Bougouni district that helped to solve the issue arose from the ex-MoBiOM field staff. With ICRAF and AMEDD, IP meeting were conducted in both technology park areas. Farmers training on different packages of technologies, organization of farmers field days and monitoring and data collection were pending activities. He mentioned three constraints in the field operation:

* Late starting of field activities, protocols and seeds were sent lately
* Lack of enough motivation for farmer leaders in the target villages. This is the situation in Bougouni where few lead farmers previously under MoBiOM were complaining of their time cost in the project. These farmers help the program to mobilize volunteer farmers. The site coordinators came with a suggestion of giving few items like sugar, soap etc..after the service rendered. However as these farmers are now mobilized under a local famer organization named FENABI we are considering partnering with FENABI in the future.
* Lack of timely responsiveness by few research centers. Few centers do not respond to mails or calls when asked to be in the intervention villages for planning and discussion of field implementation. All parties agreed to be on the right time for field operations and during feedback sessions.

1. **Management briefs**

The coordination team in ICRISAT made a brief regarding few operations. Dr. Birhanu mentioned that ICRISAT received financial reports from partner institutes except from ICRAF. Presently preparations are underway to release the second installment, once the expenditure is verified by ICRISAT finance unit. Dr Birhanu also alerted participants the presence of two field vehicles and two drivers, one for each district. Partners need to contact site coordinators should they require the use of the vehicles and drivers. There was a lack of field technician for ICRISAT’s agronomic trial activities. In this case arrangement was made with AMEDD to utilize AMEDD’s technician who will report to the site coordinator. ICRISAT will bear the cost of the technician.

1. **Evaluating the progress of implemented activities for 2016 from partner institutes**

**ILRI-led activities under Africa RISING Mali from July and August 2016**

* Planning meeting with AMEDD to elaborate on the implementation of ILRI-led livestock activities. The meeting was held on Monday 4 July, 2016 in Koutiala.
* Development of detailed protocol on feed-health interventions for improved small ruminant production including data collection instruments for AMEDD.
* Data collection of feed-health intervention is ongoing in Sirakele and Zanzoni, Koutiala. There was a mission to Koutiala from 15 to 18 August by Clarisse Umutoni to supervise the ongoing feed-health intervention. A livestock technician has been recruited by AMEDD for the monitoring of the study and for data collection. About 200 and 150 sheep and goats are being monitored in Sirakele and Zanzoni, respectively.
* The animals of the selected households in Sirakele were vaccinated against Pasteurellosis and PPR. The experimental animals were also dewormed.
* Successful defense of PhD thesis by Clarisse Umutoni on 23 July, 2016 at Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar, Senegal.

**AVRDC :**

Association of tree and vegetable research in Flola and M’Pessoba technology park areas. ICRAF and AVRDC have a joint research work on the effectiveness of simultaneous tree and vegetable production in the technology parks. The protocol is about combining crop vegetable (tomato) and tree vegetable (baoabab and moringa). We will determine the effect of the combination on tomato fruit production and leafy vegetable production for tree in comparison to pure plantation of tamato and trees.

With other partners (ICRISAT and ICRAF) land management activities with Okra variety. ICRISAT, ICRAF and AVRDC have a joint research protocol in the technology parks. The representative of AVRDC wanted to tell this story. In their part AVRDC is looking at the improvement in the production of OKRA under different land management practices established by ICRISAT and ICRAF

* Nutrition work going on: mobilization of beneficiaries for information and dissemination of seed kits, Okra
* A consultant hired on the evaluation of the implemented technologies

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* Runoff and erosion monitoring establishment completed in the two new technology parks and data collection is going on.
* MSc student who is also a technician on the ground was hired.
* Pedological studies on soil will continue, bulk density, water table,
* Farmers visit and take-up of technologies were given due attention
* Nutrition activities: most of the work was done in the laboratory, working on the data, treatment for cuscus, samples were sent for proximate and micro-nutrient analysis. In Bougouni a small clinical study is planned, administering children.
* Preparation underway to have a national livestock consultation workshop

Mary in her part briefed participants regarding her PhD study and highlighted the following:

* Published a paper, the paper was shared will all members
* Second paper will be submitted to special issue on Experimental Agriculture
* Scenario modeling workshop with farmers will commence by 5th September
* Todd Crane from Nairobi is coming to facilitate scenario modeling workshop that consists of different level of mechanization, land use distribution, overall land use change in the village. Result of the scenario workshop will be published as a paper.

1. **Follow-up of planned events following June 2016 meeting**

In our June 2016 meeting we agreed to start the process of a **National Consultation Workshop on Livestock in Mali.** In the current meeting Dr. Tabo stressed the need to establish a coordination committee. Hence Dr. Hamidou Nantume was chosen to lead the coordination committee and the following are members of the committee; AMEDD (Mr. Oumar Samake), CAAD (Gaussou Diawara), GRADCOM (Fusseni Dembele), ICRISAT (Birhanu Zemadim), IER (Kalifa Traore), and ILRI (Augustine Ayantunde). The leader of the committee will contact all members and come up with a terms of reference for the consultation meeting latest by 15th September 2016. The workshop is planned in the end of October or early November, 2016. The outcome of the workshop is identification of priorities issues on livestock which could be incorporated into the design of livestock activities in Phase II. Besides, it is to increase the visibility of livestock activities under the project by engaging key livestock actors right from the planning stage.

1. **Interim report preparation**

The project manager acknowledged the interim report submitted by partners and stressed those who didn’t send to do so by 5th September 2016.

1. **AOB**

None

The minute was compiled by Birhanu Zemadim

**Annex :List of Participants**

